

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 314 332

SO 020 445

AUTHOR Davis, John C.; And Others
TITLE Approaching 21st Century Social Studies with 19th Century Wisdom: A Peter Parley Model.
PUB DATE 26 Mar 88
NOTE 23p.; Paper presented at the Southeast Regional Council for the Social Studies (Nashville, TN, March 24-26, 1988). For related documents, see SO 020 444-446.
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reference Materials - Bibliographies (131) -- Creative Works (Literature, Drama, Fine Arts) (030)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Childrens Literature; Cultural Awareness; Culture; Elementary Secondary Education; Geography; History; Reading Materials; *Social Studies; *Teaching Methods
IDENTIFIERS *Parley (Peter)

ABSTRACT

Peter Parley (Samuel Griswold Goodrich) was the earliest writer of popular social studies books and magazines for children. His books were in print from 1828 through 1912 and sold over 12 million volumes. An annotated bibliography of 45 of his works located in the deGrummond Collection at the University of Southern Mississippi (Hattiesburg) is provided. This is followed by a brief discussion of the importance of the Peter Parley books. It is suggested that teachers now searching for ways to popularize social studies might benefit from examining some of those books. A fictional dialogue between a narrator and Peter Parley illustrates some of the devices used in the Peter Parley books; for example, numerous illustrations, questions at the end of each page that help children internalize information by restating it in their own words, the use of poetry and literature to teach such topics as geography, history, and culture, and the use of lively narrative. A five-item bibliography of references concludes the document. (JB)

* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *

ED314332

Approaching 21st Century Social Studies With
19th Century Wisdom: A Peter Parley Model

John C. Davis
J. Jesse Palmer
Ben A. Smith

The Southeast Regional Council for the Social Studies
Nashville, TN
March 24-26, 1988

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as
received from the person or organization
originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve
reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this docu-
ment do not necessarily represent official
OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

BEN A.
SMITH

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Social Studies
Using Children's Literature

Special recognition is given to Peter Parley's books because he was the earliest writer of popular social studies books and magazines for children. The fact that his books were in print from 1828 through 1912 and sold over 12,000,000 volumes attests to that fact. His works may be found in the following locations:

Amherst College Library
Boston Public Library
Harvard University Library
New York Public Library
University of Virginia Library
U. S. Library of Congress
Yale University Library

In the deGrummond Collection, at the University of Southern Mississippi, these volumes can be found:

Goodrich, S. G. (1847). A pictorial history of the United States, with notices of other portions of America. Philadelphia: Sorin & Ball, and Samuel Agnew. 354 p. 19 x 12 cm.

"In the following pages we propose to give a history of the U. S., with some account of other portions of America. History is a recital of what has happened, respecting nations and countries; and our history of America will be an account of the most interesting events that have occurred in the New World." For the use of schools. Index and pronouncing dictionary of proper names. Questions at bottom of pages. Cloth binding with many engravings.

Goodrich, S. G. (1849). A pictorial history of America: Embracing both the northern and southern portions of the New World. Hartford: House & Brown. 830 pp. + 48 (Appendix). 24.5 x 16 cm.

A pictorial history of the western world. Illustrated with more than three hundred engravings including maps. Written more for adult than some other writings. Cloth binding.

Goodrich, S. G. (1857). Recollections of a lifetime, or men and things I have seen: In a series of familiar letters to a friend, historical, biographical, anecdotal, and prescriptive (Vol. 1). New York and Auburn: Miller, Orton & Co. 542 pp. 21 x 14 cm.
Thirty letters written to "My Dear C*****." Cloth bindings with some engravings.

Goodrich, S. G. (1857). Recollections of a lifetime, or men and things I have seen: In a series of familiar letters to a friend, historical, biographical, anecdotal, and prescriptive. (Vol 2). New York and Auburn: Miller, Orton & Co. 563 pp. 21 x 14 cm.
Letters thirty-one through sixty-three to "My Dear C*****." Index for Volumes I and II. Appendix has a list of works of which Goodrich is the editor or author. Cloth binding with some engravings.

- Goodrich, S. G. (1858). Peter Parley's pictorial history of North and South America. Hartford, CT: Peter Parley Publishing Co. 943 pp.
25 x 16 cm.
A pictorial history with three hundred engravings including maps.
- The life of Christopher Columbus. (1841). Philadelphia: Thomas and Cowperthwait. 187 pp. 17 x 12 cm.
Illustrated by tales, sketches, and anecdotes. Adapted to the use of schools with questions at bottom of page. Bound in blue paper boards with leather spines. Some engravings.
- Make the best of it or Cheerful Cherry, and other tales. (1858). New York: Sheldon, Blakeman & Co. 170 pp. 15 x 10 cm.
Includes five tales: "Cheerful Cherry," "Patience Prevails," "Happy and Unhappy," "The Pleasure Boat," "Attention" by the author of Peter Parley's Tales. Cloth binding with some engravings.
- Parley, P. [pseud]. (1838) Tales about Greece. 2nd ed. London: Thomas Legg and Son. 349 pp. 14.5 x 12 cm.
Historical description of the voyage to Greece as the reader "sails" with the author. Questions at the bottom of pages. Bound in cloth with numerous engravings.
- Parley, P. [pseud] (ca 1843). Wit bought; or the life and adventures of Robert Merry. 15th ed. London: Parton & Hodge, Holborn Hill. 171 pp. 16.5 x 11 cm.
Peter Parley writes adventure tales of the life of Robert Merry as if he is Merry. Many engravings by S. Williams. Rebound.
- Parley, P. [pseud]. (1863). Persevere and prosper; or, the Siberian sable hunter. London: Darton & Clarke, Holborn Hill. 170 pp. 16 x 9.5 cm.
Adventures about Siberia told in the personal by the sable hunter. Cloth binding with some engravings and a map of the Russian empire.
- Parley, P. [pseud]. (1863). A tale of the revolution, and other sketches. New York: Sheldon & Co. 160 pp. 16 x 10.5 cm.
Historical fiction about the American revolution and other sketches including The Lottery Ticket, Dick Hieldover, and The Old Man's Story. Bound in cloth with some engravings.
- Parley, P. [pseud]. (ca 1877). The holiday keepsake. Edinburgh: Gall & Inglis. 273 pp. 17 x 12 cm.
Collection of stories "From grave to gay, from lively to serene, with many a bit of childish fun between." Cloth binding with eight full page engravings.
- Parley's book of quadrupeds: For youth. (1860). New York: Hubbard & Burgess. 320 pp. 17 x 12 cm.
"Embracing descriptions of the most interesting and remarkable quadrupeds in all countries, with particular notices of those of America." Large number of interesting anecdotes and sketches of animals. Bound in cloth and illustrated by two hundred engravings.

- Parley's Magazine Part Second. (1833). Boston: Lilly, Wait, & Co. 100 pp.
17.5 x 14 cm.
- Parley's Magazine Part Third. (1833). Boston: Lilly, Wait, & Co. 100 pp.
17.5 x 14 cm.
- Parley's Magazine Part Fourth. (1834). Boston: Lilly, Wait, & Co. 116 pp.
17.5 x ____.
- Parley's Magazine Volume Second (1834). Boston: Lilly, Wait, & Co. 416 pp.
18 x 15 cm.
- Parley's Magazine Volume III. Boston: Samuel Colman, Successor to Lilly,
Wait & Co. 416 pp. 18 x 15 cm.
- Parley's Magazine Part 6. (1835). Boston: Samuel Colman, Successor to
Lilly, Wait & Co. 111 pp. 17.5 x 14 cm.
- Parley's Magazine Part 9. Boston: Samuel Colman, Successor to Lilly, Wait
& Co. 111 pp. 17.5 x 14 cm.
- Parley's Magazine Part 10. Boston: Samuel Colman, Successor to Lilly, Wait
& Co. 94 pp. 17.5 x 14 cm.
- Parley's Magazine Part 11. Boston: Samuel Colman, Successor to Lilly, Wait
& Co. 114 pp. 17.5 x 14 cm.
- Parley's Magazine Part 12. (ca 1835) Boston: Samuel Colman, Successor to
Lilly, Wait & Co. 96 pp. 17.5 x 14 cm.
- Parley's Magazine for 1837. New York & Boston. 384 pp. 18 x 15 cm.
- Parley's stories about animals. (1836). New York: Mahlon Day. 32 pp.
17 x 13 cm.
Stories about eleven animals. Engravings for each animal hand
colored by a former owner. Tan stiff-paper wrapper.
- Parley's Stories about birds. (1836). New York: Mahlon Day. 32 pp.
17 x 13 cm.
Stories about eight birds. Poetry: Ostrich and The Bird's Nest.
Information about sport of falconry. Engravings hand colored by former
owner. Tan stiff-paper wrapper.
- Parley's tales of America. (1860). Philadelphia: Charles Desilver. 144 pp.
15 x 12 cm.
First fourteen pages missing. Parley talks about the United States of
America. Included is story of America in verse. Paper boards with
leather spine. Some engravings.
- Peter Parley's Annual: A Christmas and New Year's present for young people.
(1841). London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co. 384 pp. 15.5 x 13 cm.
Preface by Peter Parley wishes reader Merry Christmas and happy New
Year. Contains a variety of literature - tales, adventure stories,
plays. Cloth binding with numerous engravings.

Peter Parley's Annual, A Christmas and New Year's present for young people.

(1846). London: Darton & Clark, Holborn Hill. 376 pp. 15 x 13 cm.
A preface wishes reader Merry Christmas and good will for the new year.
Contains a variety of literature - stories, poetry, fables. List of
illustrated juvenile works in back. Cloth binding with numerous
engravings including two colored in the front.

Peter Parley's Annual: A Christmas and New Year's present for young people.

(1853). London: Darton & Clark, Holborn Hill. 384 pp. 16 x 12.5 cm.
Preface addresses reader as "my dear young friends" and wishes happiness
at this "merry time of the year." Contains a variety of literature -
prose, poetry. List of publisher's juvenile books in back. Cloth
binding with many engravings, some colored.

Peter Parley's Annual: A Christmas and New Year's present for young people.

(1855). London: Darton & Clark, Holborn Hill. 264 pp. 19 x 15 cm.
Preface wishes Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays. Contains a variety
of literature - prose, poetry. Cloth binding with numerous engravings
including two colored.

Peter Parley's Annual: A Christmas and New Year's present for young people.

(1857). London: Darton & Clark, Holborn Hill. 280 pp. 18.5 x 14.5 cm.
Preface wishes readers Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and gives
Parley's motto "Be merry and wise." Contains a variety of literature -
prose, poetry. The Parley Advertiser in back. Cloth binding with many
engravings - some in color.

Peter Parley's Annual: A Christmas and New Year's present. (18??). London:

Darton & Clark, Holborn Hill. 312 pp. 19 x 14.5 cm.
Page with publisher and date missing. Contains a variety of literature
- prose, biographies, verse. Some engravings with some in color.
Rebound.

Peter Parley's Annual for 1880. London: Ben George. 312 pp. 20 x 15.5 cm.

Preface wishes Happy New Year. Contains a variety of literature -
prose and poetry. Many engravings including nine colored which are
printed in oil by Ben George. Cloth binding.

Peter Parley's Juvenile Tales. (1833). Philadelphia: Desilver Jr. and Thomas. 91 pp. 14.5 x 12 cm.

A collection of previously released stories including: "The Bird's
Nest," "The Faithful Dog," "The Little Soldiers," "The Little Drummer,"
"The Little Prisoners," "The Mocking Bird," "The Mask," "The Little
Sailor." Six engravings hand colored by a former owner. Blue paper
boards with leather spine.

Peter Parley's Own Story. (1866). New York: Sheldon & Company. 320 pp. 16 x 12 cm.

From the personal narrative of the late Samuel G. Goodrich ("Peter
Parley") from birth to death. Cloth binding with six engravings.

Peter Parley's rambles in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. (1839).

New York: Samuel Colman. 266 pp. 16 x 12 cm.
Parley travels through these countries and tells of his travels. Cloth
bindings with some engravings.

Peter Parley's tales about ancient Rome, with some account of modern Italy.

(1848). Philadelphia: Thomas, Cowperthwaite & Co. 208 pp.

14.5 x 12 cm.

Parley explains the writings as a "plain man addressing those who are yet ignorant of the subject." Describes the country. Questions at the bottom of the page. Chronological table in back. Note that part of volume was written by a friend because of illness. Paper boards with leather spine. Numerous engravings.

Peter Parley's tales about Asia, Africa, and America. (1840). London:

T. Allman. 184 pp. 12.5 x 10.5 cm.

A geographical and historical description of travel by the author and reader through Asia, Africa, and America. Bound in cloth with two engravings in the introductory pages.

Peter Parley's tales about boys, at home and abroad. (1837). Richard T.

Bowyer. 188 pp. 12.5 x 10.5 cm.

Tales about boys including "The Lost Sea Boys," "Humility," "The Snake Charmer." Bound in cloth and two engravings in front of book.

Peter Parley's tales about Great Britain: Including England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. (1832). Baltimore: Joseph Jewett. 160 pp.

14 x 11.5 cm.

A description of the named countries as the author and the reader travel. Questions at the bottom of some pages. Bound in orange paper boards with a leather spine. Illustrated by a map and numerous engravings.

Peter Parley's tales about kings & queens, with an historical review of their characters, and the great events of their respective reigns. (ca 1830).

Richard T. Bowyer. 188 pp. 12.5 x 10.5 cm.

A family conference led by the father and mother about the best kings and queens that ever reigned. Discussed alphabetically. Bound in cloth with engravings in the front of Queen Elizabeth and Peter Parley.

Peter Parley's tales about the sun, moon, and stars. (1855). Philadelphia:

Cowperthwait, Desilver & Butler. 115 pp. 15 x 12 cm.

Book of astronomy - describes the sun, moon, and stars. Questions at bottom of pages. Cloth binding with numerous engravings.

Peter Parley's tales of the sea. (1858). Philadelphia: Charles Desilver.

136 pp. 15 x 12 cm.

Parley tells of the great waters that surround the world. Questions at bottom of pages. Cloth binding with many engravings.

A tale of the revolution, and other sketches. (1845). Philadelphia: Sorin & Ball. 160 pp. 15.5 x 10.5.

Historical fiction about the American Revolution and other sketches including The Lottery Ticket, Dick Hieldover, and The Old Man's Story. By the author of Peter Parley's Tales. Bound in cloth with some engravings.

PAPER PRESENTED AT SOUTHEAST REGIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE
SOCIAL STUDIES
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE - MARCH 24,25,26 - 1988

APPROACHING THE 21ST. CENTURY SOCIAL STUDIES WITH A 19TH.
CENTURY WISDOM: A PETER PARLEY MODEL

BY BEN SMITH, JOHN C. DAVIS, JESSE PALMER

TEXT
THAT WAS
ORALLY PRESENTED
AT THE
REGIONAL
MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL FOR THE
SOCIAL STUDIES
NASHVILLE, TN.

TEXT
THAT WAS
ORALLY PRESENTED
HAD 25 SLIDES
THAT HELPED
HIGHLIGHT
THE PRESENTATION
IN
NASHVILLE, TN.

RATIONALE FOR THE UTILIZATION OF A 19TH. CENTURY PETER
PARLEY MODEL AND CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AS AN
ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF POPULARIZING SOCIAL STUDIES
IN THE 21ST. CENTURY



Figure 1.—Peter Parley as depicted in Samuel Goodrich's books, courtesy of the deGrummond Collection at the University of Southern Mississippi.

PAPER PRESENTED AT SOUTHEAST REGIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE
SOCIAL STUDIES

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE - MARCH 24,25,26 - 1988

APPROACHING THE 21ST. CENTURY SOCIAL STUDIES WITH A 19TH
CENTURY WISDOM: A PETER PARLEY MODEL

COSTUME DESIGN
LARRY MULLICAN

COSTUME
PRODUCTION
SYLVIA SMITH

AUDIO ENGINEER
LAWRENCE ADAMS

BY BEN SMITH, JOHN C. DAVIS, JESSE PALMER

AS TEACHERS SEARCH FOR WAYS TO POPULARIZE SOCIAL STUDIES, IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE TO EXAMINE THE PERSON WHO PRODUCED SOME OF THE MOST POPULAR SOCIAL STUDIES BOOKS PUBLISHED DURING THE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES. PETER PARLEY, A PEN NAME FOR SAMUEL GRISWOLD GOODRICH, WAS THE FIRST AMERICAN WRITER OF SOCIAL STUDIES MATERIALS THAT EXPLICITLY ADDRESSED AMERICAN CHILDREN. THE POPULARITY OF HIS BOOKS IS EVIDENCED BY THE FACT THAT HIS WORKS SOLD OVER TWELVE MILLION COPIES AND MANY OF HIS WORKS WERE PIRATED BY PUBLISHERS IN THE UNITED STATES AND ABROAD.

SAMUEL GOODRICH WAS BORN IN RIDGEFIELD, CONNECTICUT IN 1793. HE BECAME A WELL KNOWN PUBLISHER IN HARTFORD AND BOSTON, BUT AS AN AUTHOR HE MADE THE PEN NAME PETER PARLEY FAMOUS. BEFORE HIS DEATH IN 1860, HE HAD WRITTEN TALES OF AFRICA, ASIA, AMERICA, EUROPE, AND NUMEROUS OTHERS, BOOKS THAT WERE PLANNED ESPECIALLY FOR USE IN SCHOOL. HIS GOAL WAS TO PROVIDE INTERESTING AND INFORMATIVE READING TO CHILDREN.

PART OF THE GENERAL APPEAL OF THE PETER PARLEY BOOKS WAS THE EXTENSIVE USE OF ILLUSTRATIONS, AN IDEA THAT WAS NOT NECESSARILY NEW. ST. VINCENT DE PAUL (1580-1660), A FRENCHMAN WHO DONNED THE ROBES OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CLERGY, MAY HAVE BEEN THE FIRST TO SUGGEST THE USE OF

ILLUSTRATIONS FOR TEACHING CHILDREN. HE CALLED SISTERS, DAUGHTERS OF CHARITY, FROM THEIR CLOISTERS TO VENTURE INTO NEARBY VILLAGES TO TEACH CATECHISM LESSONS TO YOUNG CHILDREN BY THE USE OF PICTURES AND FIGURES.

IT WOULD BE SAFE TO SAY THAT THE THINKING AND WORK OF EARLY EDUCATORS, PARTICULARLY JOHN AMOS COMENIUS (1592-1670) AND JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU (1712-1778), INFLUENCED GOODRICH'S APPROACH IN WRITING FOR YOUNG CHILDREN. COMENIUS URGED THE TEACHER TO APPEAL TO THE CHILD'S SENSORY PERCEPTIONS BY USING MATERIAL BASED ON THE CHILD'S OWN EXPERIENCES. TO ILLUSTRATE HIS THEORY, HE PUBLISHED, ORBUS SENSUALIUM PICTUS (1658), A BOOK DESIGNED TO TEACH LATIN TO YOUNG CHILDREN THROUGH PICTURES OF FAMILIAR OBJECTS. GOODRICH IN TURN USED THIS TECHNIQUE IN MOST OF HIS WORKS.

AS THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY DREW TO A CLOSE, THE IMPACT OF ROUSSEAU, AN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION THEORIST, WAS FELT IN THE FIELD OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AND THIS ALSO INFLUENCED GOODRICH'S WRITING STYLE. FOLLOWING ROUSSEAU'S THEORY OF ALLOWING THE CHILD TO DEVELOP NATURALLY AS HE SEARCHED FOR KNOWLEDGE, GOODRICH SEIZED UPON EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO ENCOURAGE COMMENTS BY A CHILD OR TO CALL ATTENTION TO OBJECTS OF INTEREST SO THAT INCIDENTS MIGHT BE USED AS A MEANS OF INSTRUCTION. WITH ROUSSEAU'S THEORY IN

MIND, GOODRICH FREQUENTLY UTILIZED DIALOGUES AND CONVERSATIONS AS WELL AS CALLING ATTENTION TO OBJECTS OF INTEREST IN HIS BOOKS.

PERHAPS, IF WE EXAMINED SOME OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY LITERARY WORKS OF SAMUEL GOODRICH WE COULD GAIN SOME INSIGHT INTO POPULARIZING SOCIAL STUDIES IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY. IF YOU WERE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO TALK WITH GOODRICH'S FICTIONAL CHARACTER, PETER PARLEY, THE CONVERSATION MIGHT REFLECT THE FOLLOWING DIALOGUE.

A DIALOGUE WITH PETER PARLEY

NARRATOR:

PETER PARLEY WAS PICTURED IN HIS WORKS AS AN ELDERLY MAN WITH WHITE HAIR, WEARING A DARK BUTTONED COAT, TIGHT KNEE BREECHES, AND WIDE-BRIMMED HAT SUPPORTING HIMSELF WITH A CANE. SOMETIMES HE WAS PICTURED SITTING, SURROUNDED BY CHILDREN, AS IF HE WERE TELLING A STORY. WHY DID THESE PICTURES OF AN ELDERLY MAN APPEAR IN MANY OF YOUR WORKS?

PETER PARLEY:

△ Pic
Parley, etc.

I GAVE A PICTURE OF MYSELF AS I WANTED MY CHILDHOOD READERS TO PERCEIVE ME. I WANTED TO BECOME A WELCOMED FRIEND AND A TRUSTED TEACHER. MY GENERAL APPEARANCE STIMULATED CHILDREN TO RECALL ONE OF THE GREATEST PATRIOTIC FIGURES OF ALL TIME (BENJAMIN FRANKLIN). I WANTED TO SYMBOLIZE AMERICAN PATRIOTISM AND BE RECOGNIZED AS A STORYTELLER THAT CHILDREN LOOKED FORWARD TO HEARING.

NARRATOR:

WAS THE USE OF THIS IMAGE SUCCESSFUL?

PETER PARLEY:

BASED ON THE RESPONSE MY BOOKS RECEIVED, I WOULD HAVE TO

SAY YES. BETWEEN THE YEARS 1828 AND 1912, THE YEARS MY BOOKS WERE IN PRINT, TWELVE MILLION COPIES WERE SOLD. IN ADDITION, FORTUNE SEEKERS, REALIZING THE POPULARITY OF MY BOOKS, SIMPLY REPRODUCED MY WORKS AT HOME AND ABROAD USING THE PARLEY NAME.

NARRATOR:

HOW DO YOU ACCOUNT FOR YOUR POPULARITY OVER SUCH A LONG PERIOD OF TIME?

PETER PARLEY:

I TRIED TO TAKE MY READERS ON AN IMAGINATIVE TRIP DESCRIBING PEOPLE AND PLACES ALONG THE WAY. MY BOOKS REFLECTED AN UNDERSTANDING OF CHILDREN'S TASTES AND THEIR NEED FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE STORIES. I TRIED TO CONVERT BORING SUBJECTS INTO LIVELY DISCUSSIONS. INCIDENTLY, I PROMOTED THE SALE OF FUTURE BOOKS BY SUGGESTING TO MY READERS, THAT THEY COULD COUNT ON AND LOOK FOR FUTURE TITLES.

NARRATOR:

PETER PARLEY'S TALES OF AMERICA WAS YOUR FIRST BOOK AND SEEMED TO SET THE STYLE FOR FUTURE WORKS. CAN YOU TELL ME A LITTLE ABOUT THIS WORK?

PETER PARLEY:

THIS WORK WAS CREATED TO GIVE CHILDREN THEIR FIRST IDEAS ABOUT GEOGRAPHY AND AMERICAN HISTORY THROUGH THE EYES OF AN AMERICAN. I PROJECTED A DUAL ROLE IN THIS WORK AS NARRATOR OF HISTORICAL EVENTS AND A PARTICIPANT IN MANY OF THE INCIDENTS. A TOPIC WAS ADDRESSED, A QUESTION ADDRESSING THAT TOPIC FOLLOWED, AND FINALLY A DEVICE SUCH AS POETRY WAS USED TO RESTATE THE HIGH POINTS OF THE BOOK.

*Parley
Tied up*

NARRATOR:

MR. PARLEY, WHY DID YOU USE THE IDEA OF A DUAL ROLE IN MANY OF YOUR BOOKS?

PETER PARLEY:

UNTIL THE INTRODUCTION OF MY BOOKS, AMERICAN CHILDREN WERE PRESENTED WITH HISTORIES AND GEOGRAPHIES WRITTEN MOSTLY IN ENGLAND. THEY WERE DRY AND FACTUAL FROM AN ENGLISHMAN'S POINT OF VIEW AND THERE WAS LITTLE USE OF ANECDOTAL MATERIAL. I WANTED MY AUDIENCE TO EXPERIENCE WITH ME THE TRAVELS AND ADVENTURES I REPORTED. IN THIS WAY, THE READER AND I DEVELOPED AN INTIMATE ATTACHMENT AS WE MOVED THROUGH THE BOOK TOGETHER. MY DIALOGUE TALKED TO CHILDREN RATHER THAN AT THEM. I ADDRESSED MY YOUNG READERS WITH DOWN TO EARTH AND DIRECT LANGUAGE FROM AN AMERICAN POINT OF VIEW.

NARRATOR:

IT WAS COMMON, MR. PARLEY, THROUGHOUT YOUR WORKS TO DESCRIBE SOMETHING - THEN SAY, "HERE IS A PICTURE." WHAT WERE YOU TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH BY USING THIS STYLE?

PETER PARLEY:

I BELIEVED THAT IN TEACHING FACTS, LIKE HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY, A TEACHER SHOULD BE AWARE OF A CHILD'S SENSES. I SELECTED AS SUBJECTS FOR MY BOOKS THINGS CAPABLE OF BEING PERCEIVED THROUGH THE SENSES, AND PICTURES WERE A GOOD STARTING POINT. LIKE I SAID IN ONE OF MY POEMS:

" CHILDREN ARE SIMPLE, LOVING, TRUE--
'TIS GOD THAT MADE THEM SO;
AND WOULD YOU TEACH THEM?--BE SO, TOO,
AND STOOP TO WHAT THEY KNOW.
BEGIN WITH SIMPLE LESSONS, THINGS
ON WHICH THEY LOVE TO LOOK;
FLOWERS, PEBBLES, INSECTS, BIRDS ON WINGS--
THESE ARE GOD'S SPELLING BOOK!

NARRATOR:

YOU WROTE ABOUT AMERICA, EUROPE, AFRICA, ASIA AND MANY MORE PLACES. THESE WERE SOME OF THE EARLIEST SOCIAL STUDIES TEXTBOOKS IN AMERICA.

PETER PARLEY:

I BELIEVE THAT'S A FAIR OBSERVATION. MY TALES OF TRAVEL THROUGHOUT THE WORLD RESEMBLED "TRAVELOGUES". I AM CONVINCED THAT FACT CAN BE AS INTERESTING AS FICTION. I WANTED TO PROVIDE CHILDREN WITH A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY, GOVERNMENT, AND CULTURAL CONCEPTS. USING LITERATURE TO ACCOMPLISH THIS PURPOSE WORKED EFFECTIVELY.

NARRATOR:

IT SEEMED TO BE A COMMON PRACTICE OF YOURS TO PLACE QUESTIONS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE IN YOUR BOOKS. WHAT WAS YOUR PURPOSE IN DOING THIS?

Questions

PETER PARLEY:

I TRIED TO WRITE IN A CLEAR, CONCISE STYLE IN ORDER TO ACCOMMODATE A VARIETY OF READING LEVELS AND HELP CHILDREN BETTER UNDERSTAND SOCIAL STUDIES CONCEPTS AT THE SAME TIME.

I LIKE TO IMAGINE MYSELF ON THE FLOOR SURROUNDED BY A GROUP OF BOYS AND GIRLS, AND I WROTE TO THEM AS I WOULD HAVE SPOKEN TO THEM. I LOVE TO TELL A STORY AND IMMEDIATELY ASK THE CHILDREN QUESTIONS. WHEN A CHILD RESTATES AN EVENT IN HIS OWN WORDS HE INTERNALIZES IT.

NARRATOR:

IF YOU COULD MAKE ONE SUGGESTION TO SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS TODAY ABOUT HOW TO IMPROVE THEIR INSTRUCTION AND PROMOTE SOCIAL STUDIES, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

PETER PARLEY:

TEACHERS SHOULD UTILIZE A CHILD'S NATURAL CURIOSITY TO DEVELOP LESSONS WHICH USE CREATIVE NARRATION GUIDING STUDENTS FROM SIMPLE TO MORE COMPLEX IDEAS. MAKE THE LESSON AN ADVENTURE AND THE CHILDREN PARTICIPANTS IN EXPLORING, OBSERVING, AND PROMOTING THE FREE FLOW OF IDEAS.

NARRATOR:

FROM OUR CONVERSATION, I GATHER THAT YOU CONVERTED BORING TEXTBOOKS INTO LIVELY NARRATIVES WHICH WERE VERY POPULAR WITH YOUNG READERS. YOU HAD A NATURAL WRITING STYLE THAT SPOKE TO CHILDREN IN EVERYDAY LANGUAGE. YOUR WORKS WERE SOME OF THE EARLIEST TRAVELOGUES WHICH CONTRASTED DRASTICALLY WITH SOCIAL STUDIES TEXTBOOKS. PERHAPS, THIS WAS THE KEY TO YOUR POPULARITY. THERE IS A POSSIBILITY THAT CURRENT TEXTBOOKS FOCUS UPON SO MANY FACTS AND CONCEPTS THAT THE RESULT IS LITTLE INTERNALIZATION OF MATERIAL. I SURMIZE FROM OUR CONVERSATION THAT THE KEY TO POPULARIZING SOCIAL STUDIES MIGHT BE TO INCORPORATE

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE INTO SOCIAL STUDIES INSTRUCTION. SINCE LITERATURE IS A VITAL PART OF OUR CULTURAL HERITAGE, IT SEEMS ONLY NATURAL TO INCORPORATE IT INTO THE SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM. I BELIEVE THAT LITERATURE AND SOCIAL STUDIES MAY COME CLOSER TO ADDRESSING ALL OF OUR BASIC HUMAN NEEDS THAN ANY OTHER COMPONENT OF THE CURRICULUM. THROUGH SOCIAL STUDIES, SUPPLEMENTED WITH LITERATURE, WE CAN LEARN ABOUT OURSELVES, OTHER PEOPLE, OTHER TIMES AND PLACES, AND ENJOY IT AT THE SAME TIME.

REFERENCES:

COLEMAN, J.E. (1967). THE MASTER TEACHERS AND THE ART OF TEACHING. NEW YORK: PITMAN PUBLISHING CORPORATION.

GOODRICH, S.G. (1856). PETER PARLEY'S OWN STORY. NEW YORK: SHELDON & CO.

GOODRICH, S.G. (1827). TALES OF PETER PARLEY ABOUT AMERICA. BOSTON: S.G. GOODRICH.

JORDON, A.M. (MARCH, 1934). "PETER PARLEY," THE HORN BOOK MAGAZINE, 10, 96-101.

PALMER, J.J., SMITH, B.A., & DAVIS, J.C. (1988). "SOCIAL STUDIES ACCORDING TO PETER PARLEY." THE SOCIAL STUDIES, 79(1), 10-13.

ROSELLE, D. (1968). SAMUEL GRISWOLD GOODRICH, CREATOR OF PETER PARLEY: A STUDY OF HIS LIFE AND WORK. ALBANY, NY: STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK PRESS.